

Joint Forest Management Programme

2204. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as many as 350 million Indians live in close proximity of forests, with a majority of them dependent on forest produce for energy and livelihood;

(b) whether, as result of this, our forests are constantly being degraded and many schemes for afforestation, involving the people, are barely adequate to sustain a covered area of 19% of which only 11% are adequately dense; and

(c) if so, what has been the effect of the Joint Forest Management Programme and the degree of involvement of people in it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes Sir. A large section of rural poor are living in close proximity of forests and are dependent on forests for energy and their livelihood needs.

(b) According to 1999 assessment done by Forest Survey of India, 19.39% of country's geographic area constitutes forest cover out of which 11.48% area is dense forest. As per National Forest Policy, 1988 one third of country's geographic area should be under forest/tree cover but due to increased biotic pressure the forest area is getting degraded. Government is making efforts to increase the forest cover through afforestation activities and involvement of local people on care and share basis. However, the level of investment is not yet adequate due to financial constraints.

(c) As per the provisions of National Forest Policy, 1988 Government of India had issued guidelines to the state government; on June 1, 1990, to involve village communities in regeneration and protection of forest lands under the Joint Forest Management (JFM) programme. As per information available, till now twenty two states have issued government resolution on JFM. In these states 36.130 JFM Committees have been constituted and 10.249 million ha. forest

area has been covered under JFM. People's participation is mandatory in all the afforestation schemes of the government. As reported by the state governments the forest cover has increased in the areas covered under JFM. Total forest cover as per 1999 assessment of Forest Survey of India has increased by 3896 sq. km., as compared to 1997 assessment.

Zoos and big Cats

2205. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Zoos in the country and the numbers of tigers, lions and other wild cats in each Zoos, in the beginning of 1998, 1999, 2000 and at present, indicating the number of births and deaths each year; and

(b) the expenditure incurred on maintenance of these Zoos?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) There are 199 recognised zoos in the country. The number of Tigers, Lions and Panthers in 38 zoos for 1997-98 and 1998-99 are given in Annexure. Information regarding births and deaths for the three species is also given in the Annexure [*See Appendix 190, Annexure No. 32*] Details of births and deaths for the year 2000 are not available.

(b) The ownership pattern of zoos is quite varied and includes private companies and trusts also. As such expenditure figures for zoos are not compiled and collated in this Ministry.

Pollution by Tanneries in Tamil Nadu

2206. SRHI R. MARGABANDU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the Tanner Pollution by tanneries in North Arcot district in Tamil Nadu, stating the extent of damage to lands and health hazards;

(b) whether it is happening inspite of Supreme Court